

FAQ: Special Content Sessions

1. What are Special Content Sessions?

Groups are invited to design an engaging ninety-minute session, such as a panel of invited speakers, a single invited speaker, a facilitated book discussion, as well as less-conventional sessions like an unconference or flipped session. The only type of programming that cannot be done in a special content session is a call for papers. This is a chance to design the programming that you want to see. Applications will be competitively reviewed, and a limited number will be selected for presentation.

Special content sessions are not an opportunity for vendors to showcase new products or services. For information on advertising and sponsorship opportunities at the 2017 meeting, please contact [Barbara Redmond](#).

2. How many special content sessions will be conducted at MLA'17

We plan to accommodate up to 10 sessions. NOTE that there were many more applications than could be accommodated at MLA '16, so applicants should expect the process to be competitive.

3. Who can submit a special content session application?

Any group can submit an application (e.g., an MLA section, a special interest group [SIG], or chapter). Informal groups—for example, “nine librarians interested in team based learning” or “a group of librarians from a library that think they have an innovative way of doing something”—are also encouraged to apply. The 2017 National Planning Committee encourages groups to work together and cosponsor sessions.

4. What are the costs for a special content session and how can I pay for them?

MLA will provide a meeting room with a theater-style seating configuration, computer, computer projector, screens, table or podium, and microphones in each special content session room. The sponsoring group is responsible for paying for other meeting facilities such as special room sets, dedicated Internet and added AV. To determine costs for these, contact Tina Vickery, MLA's meeting planner.

Speaker fees and/or speaker travel expenses, if applicable, are the responsibility of the sponsoring group. If your group is sponsoring a single invited speaker: Invited speakers who are not current members of MLA, and

who have not held membership in MLA in the past five years will be given one day of complimentary meeting registration. To request courtesy registration for an invited speaker, contact [Susan Chesniak](#). If the invited speaker is a current member of MLA, they are required to register for the day of their presentation. The speaker or sponsoring section must pay for this.. If your group is sponsoring a panel of speakers: No complimentary registration will be provided for panelists. Each panelist must register for the conference. One-day registrations are available.

Potential sources of funds to cover expenses include partnering with an MLA Section or obtaining a grant. MLA sections may engage in fundraising after October 1st (about 7 months before the meeting). Sections that plan to engage in fundraising should contact [Ray Naegele, Director of Financial and Administrative Services](#)). MLA staff can assist and arrange recognition for the sponsor.

5. How do I submit a special content session application?

Applications for special content sessions are to be submitted by October 10, 2016 using MLA's online submission site. <coming soon> Since the application requires some writing, it is suggested that the application be prepared in word processing software and then the content be copied and pasted into the abstract submission site. View the application. <coming soon>

6. How do I blind my submission for a special content session?

The primary contact and sponsor names on the application will be hidden from reviewers. Please avoid including identifying information such as sponsoring group names, institutional affiliations, company names, and addresses in other aspects of the application.

7. How will the applications be reviewed?

Volunteer reviewers will score the applications. Final selections will be made by the NPC'17 Program Planning Group: Ryan Harris, Lisa Marks, Mary Piorun, Emily Vardell, and Jeff Williams.

Applicants will receive blinded reviewer comments on their applications.

8. When will I be notified about acceptance or rejection?

The primary contact for special content sessions will be notified of acceptance or rejection around December 16, 2016. You will be notified of the precise date and time of your session no later than the end of December 2016.

My session got accepted—now what? Preparing for the meeting

Once accepted, special content sessions will be added to the Conference Harvester system, and the primary contact identified on the application will be invited to view the Conference Harvester. Additional audiovisual or other setup needs can be requested through the Conference Harvester and are due February 20, 2017.

9. Register.

Individuals presenting at or moderating a special content session must be registered for the meeting.

Register for the meeting [MLA`17](#)

10. Prepare materials for program.

Accepted special content sessions will be uploaded in the Conference Harvester. By February 20, 2017, the primary contact must log in to the Conference Harvester and ensure the program title and description are accurate. You may also add presenter, moderator, and facilitator names into the description if desired. The title will appear in the printed program. The title, description, and names of sponsoring groups will appear in the online meeting planner.

11. Use PowerPoint slides.

The primary contact for the session should contact the speakers or panelists and obtain copies of their slides or presentations. The primary contact should upload the slides in the Conference Harvester by May 12, 2017. Speakers and panelists are invited to view their slides in the speaker ready room at the meeting and make changes if needed.

12. Find assistance.

Inquiries about special content session applications and review criteria should be directed to [Jeff Williams](#).

For help with other aspects of your special content session experience, please contact staff: [Mary Oberman](#), project manager, 630.929.7927; [Ray Naegele](#), director of financial and administrative services, 312.419.9094 x17; or [Tina Vickery](#), MLA meeting manager. Support is available 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., central time, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.